



DISASTER NEWS

Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses

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Disaster Assistance Available for Small Businesses

Sacramento, CA – Small, non-farm businesses in all 77 Oklahoma counties (plus contiguous counties in Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico and Texas) may now apply for low interest disaster loans from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These disaster loans offset economic losses caused by agriculture production losses caused by drought, high temperatures, high winds and fire in Oklahoma beginning July 1, 2005, announced Alfred E. Judd, Director of SBA's Disaster Field Operations Center - West.

Small businesses in the following counties may also apply for economic losses that are attributable to agriculture production losses caused by adverse weather conditions:

Small businesses in the neighboring Arkansas counties of Benton, Crawford, Little River, Polk, Scott, Sebastian, Sevier and Washington; the Colorado county of Baca; the Kansas Counties of Barber, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Clark, Comanche, Cowley, Harper, Labette, Meade, Montgomery, Morton, Seward, Stevens and Sumner; the Missouri counties of McDonald and Newton; the New Mexico county of Union; and the Texas counties of Bowie, Childress, Clay, Collingsworth, Cooke, Dallam, Fannin, Grayson, Hansford, Hardeman, Hemphill, Lamar, Lipscomb, Montague, Ochiltree, Red River, Sherman, Wheeler, Wichita, and Wilbarger are also eligible to apply.

Small businesses may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$1.5 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred. "Eligibility for these loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of 4%, a maximum term of 30 years, and are restricted to small businesses without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship," Judd said.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. Secretary Mike Johanns declared these disasters at the request of Governor Brad Henry.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are ineligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency (FSA) about the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration. However, in drought disasters nurseries are eligible to apply for SBA disaster assistance.

For information and application forms call toll-free (800) 659-2955, or visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster. Hearing impaired individuals may call (800) 877-8339. Mail completed applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration at 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for these loans is **October 30, 2006**.

For more information visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster.

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